

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) An electronic write protect apparatus for storage media comprising:

at least one record/play element for ~~reading and~~ writing information to/from a given magnetic storage media;

a pre-existing electronic information signal detection element to ~~read~~ detect a pre-existing electronic information signal stored on said given magnetic storage media; and

a record circuit, ~~adapted to~~ allow recording ~~record~~ on said given magnetic storage media when said pre-existing electronic information signal detection element detects no pre-existing electronic information signal stored on said given magnetic storage media, ~~to activate and deactivate said at least one record/play element based on a mere existence of a pre-recorded signal already recorded on said given magnetic storage media, as detected by said pre-existing information signal detection element.~~

2. (currently amended) The electronic write protect apparatus for storage media according to claim 1, ~~comprising~~ wherein:

~~a plurality of~~ said at least one record/play element[[s]] comprises at least two record elements.

3. (currently amended) The electronic write protect apparatus for storage media according to claim 1, wherein:

said at least one record/play element is attached to a spinning element.

4. (currently amended) The electronic write protect apparatus for storage media according to claim 1, wherein:

said at least one record/~~play~~ element is stationary.

5. (previously presented) The electronic write protect apparatus for storage media according to claim 3, wherein:

said pre-existing electronic information signal detection element is attached to said spinning element.

6. (currently amended) The electronic write protect apparatus for storage media according to claim 1, wherein:

said given magnetic storage media is a video tape.

7. (currently amended) The electronic write protect apparatus for storage media according to claim 1, wherein:

said given magnetic storage media stores digital information.

8. (currently amended) The electronic write protect apparatus for storage media according to claim 1, wherein:

said pre-existing electronic information signal detection element is a ~~record~~/play element.

9. (currently amended) An electronic write protect method for storage media comprising:

attempting to record information on a given video tape placed in a said video cassette player;

detecting a pre-existing video signal from said given video tape;
and

deactivating a record circuit in said video cassette player based on detection of a mere existence of said pre-existing video signal already recorded on said given video tape.

10. (currently amended) The electronic write protect method for storage media according to claim 9, wherein:

~~said step of~~ attempting to record information is performed by multiple record/~~play~~ elements.

11. (currently amended) The electronic write protect method for storage media according to claim 9, wherein:

~~said step of~~ attempting to record information is performed by a spinning record element.

12. (currently amended) The electronic write protect method for storage media according to claim 9, wherein:

~~said step of~~ attempting to record information is performed by a stationary record element.

13. (currently amended) The electronic write protect method for storage media according to claim 11, wherein:

~~said step of~~ detecting a said pre-existing video signal is performed by a said spinning play element.

14. (currently amended) The electronic write protect method for storage media according to claim 9, wherein:

said video tape stores digital information in magnetic form.

15. (currently amended) The electronic write protect method for storage media according to claim 9, wherein:

said ~~step of~~ detecting a said pre-existing video signal is performed by a ~~record~~/play element.

16. (currently amended) An electronic write protect means for storage media comprising:

means for attempting to record information on a given video tape placed in a ~~said~~ video cassette player;

means for detecting a pre-existing video signal from said given video tape; and

means for deactivating a record circuit in said video cassette player based on detection of ~~a mere existence of~~ said pre-existing video signal already recorded on said given video tape.

17. (currently amended) The electronic write protect means for storage media according to claim 16, wherein:

said means for attempting to record information is performed by multiple ~~record~~/play elements.

18. (currently amended) The electronic write protect means for storage media according to claim 16, wherein:

said means for attempting to record information is performed by a spinning record element.

19. (currently amended) The electronic write protect means for storage media according to claim 16, wherein:

said means for attempting to record information is performed by a stationary record element.

20. (currently amended) The electronic write protect means for storage media according to claim 18, wherein:

said means for detecting a said pre-existing video signal is performed by ~~said~~ a spinning play element.

21. (currently amended) The electronic write protect means for storage media according to claim 16, wherein:

said video tape stores digital information in magnetic form.

22. (currently amended) The electronic write protect means for storage media according to claim 16, wherein:

said means for detecting a said pre-existing video signal is performed by a ~~record~~/play element.